**Trump’s haunted ‘deal of the century’? Part – I**

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Apparently, much is being trumpeted by the Trump administration to strike a deal that addresses the core issue of decades’ old conflict between the Arabs and the Israelis, yet a fair investigation into the so-called deal of the century reveals that it is all about nothing but a feigning peace plan devised via a haunted conflict resolution. The plan is a cleverly designed blueprint advocating both the centripetal and centrifugal tendencies of accommodation and confrontation, though one might have strong reasons to believe that the said deal could hardly succeed. By all means, the Trump-Bibi planted deal is a mischievous synthesis of most of the Israeli right’s quest for a Greater Israel, comprising 88 percent of the land stolen from Palestinians over the period of seven decades, with a few concessions to the Palestinian.

An Israeli newspaper published a document highlighting the details regarding the U.S. back-channel peace plan known as the “Deal of the Century”. A tripartite but a euphoric US-Israel drafted agreement will be signed between Israel, and the two Palestinian factions, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Hamas. According to the plan, a Palestinian state called “New Palestine” will be established in Judea, Samaria (in the West Bank) and Gaza, with the exception of Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

As reliably reported, US President Trump is shortly expected to present his peace plan, a fiat accompli work jointly made by the Kushner-Netanyahu team to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict soon. The Trump administration hopes that when the peace plan is finally put on the table, the pressure will exert on the Palestinians to formally enter into negotiations with Israel. It is albeit presumed that the plan will allow both sides to pick and choose, taking out of the plan what they believe palatable while rejecting those parts what they believe unforeseeable. Though the said plan is not expected to offer a two-state solution, yet it offers a quasi- blueprint for a one-state solution where Israel dominates as a nation state in the region. And however, the deal instrument will also include appendices to solutions to address the issues such as borders, security arrangements, Palestinian refugees and the status of Jerusalem.

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Geopolitically, the view shared by some strategists suggests that the plan boils down to a grand exchange: The Arab states recognize Israel and Israel recognizes Palestine, both with capital cities in Jerusalem. This approach builds on elements forwarded by Egypt’s President SISI in 2016, the Obama administration in 2009, the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, and even the 1990 symmetry plan. But it is half-heartedly believed that the Trump administration by lodging this peace plan, gives the Arab-states a chance to come forward first to negotiate and thereafter the Palestinians should consider it, meaning thereby to use the US’ controlled Arab lobby as a driving political force to break the ice of the Arab-Israeli peace. These prior plans either had Israel go first or called for simultaneous steps; in contrast, Trump’s has the Arab states initiate, with Israel responding. This change prompted Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority (PA) immediately to reject the “deal of the century” when he met with Trump in May 2017; one report noted that “Abbas has long feared such a plan” and “vehemently opposed” it.

The glaring but controversial features of the said plain are: -A joint PA-Jordan body controls Jerusalem’s Islamic sanctuaries;-Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon give more rights to their Palestinian residents;-Jewish residents in smaller West Bank towns are relocated;-A land passage connects the West Bank and Gaza;-Gaza joins Palestine when the PA regains control of it ;- New Palestine will be given two new routes to Jordan with crossings under its control; and last but not least; the new Palestine will not be allowed to create an army since the only weapons it will be allowed to possess will be light weapons for the police; A protection treaty would be signed between Israel and New Palestine under which it will pay Israel to defend it from foreign aggression; – If Hamas and the PLO refuse to sign the ‘Deal of the Century’, the U.S. will cancel all financial support to the Palestinians and ensure that no country transfers funds to them; Hamas, according to the proposed deal, will agree to hold a free election a year after the deal is made. These elections will decide the fate of the would-be government in New Palestine; -If the PLO signed the deal but Hamas or Islamic Jihad refused, the leaders of these two movements will be considered responsible; -If Israel refused to sign the deal, the U.S. would cease all financial support.

While expressing his view about the deal, Trump’s son in law Kushner said: “We’ve taken, I think, an unconventional approach,” he said. “Normally they start with a process and then hope that the process leads to a resolution … What we’ve done is the opposite. We’ve done very extensive research and a lot of talking to a lot of the people. We’re not trying to impose our will.” The US envoy to Israel David Friedman said, “The Palestinian people deserve the opportunity to consider a meaningful alternative to the status quo,” he said, “As does Israel. We see value in presenting that vision, even if the initial Palestinian leadership reaction is negative.”

But one could hardly deny the controversial credibility that both Kushner and David Friedman hold regarding this plan clearly vindicated by the fact the main characters behind the plan, the US Ambassador David Friedman and Jason Greenblatt, the special representative for international negotiations have played other pivotal roles, the US embassy move to Jerusalem was the brainchild of David Friedman who also removed the term occupation from US State Department discourse. Whilst Greenblatt, meanwhile, has been regarded as a propagandist for Israel and to troll Palestinian leaders, via his Twitter role.

And yet most unjustifiably, the Palestinians’ warranted demands– about an independent state in the West Bank, and Gaza, lands captured by Israel in the 1967 war; the creation of the Palestine state via two-state solution; a free passage of borders between the two sovereign states pass along lines that existed before the 1967 Six-Day ; and the establishment of East Jerusalem as the capital of the future Palestinian state-have been totally ignored.

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